

species of *Prunus* than in the case of some other woody plants, the pines and oaks for instance. The interested reader may find it worth while to study the statements about the habitats of *Prunus* in Sargent's *Silva*, Wight's Native American species of *Prunus* (U. S. Dept. Agr. Bull. 179. 1915), and some of the more elaborate local floras, such as the recent flora of Connecticut by Graves and others, Stone's flora of southern New Jersey (referred to by Mr. Long, and reviewed by the writer in *Torreyia* **12**: 216-225. 1912), Kearney's Botanical Survey of the Dismal Swamp region, and Mohr's Plant Life of Alabama.

Many other genera of plants of course are just as sensitive to fire as *Prunus* is, and any one who wishes to look further into the effects of this neglected environmental factor can find references and cross-references in the following places:— Bull. Torrey Bot. Club **38**: 522. 1911, **41**: 217. 1914; *Torreyia* **12**: 147, 219. 1912; **15**: 30. 1915; Geol. Surv. Ala. Monog. **8**: 211. 1913; Pop. Sci. Monthly **85**: 338. 1914; Ann. Rep. Fla. Geol. Surv. **6**: 184-185, 282-283, 286, 442. 1914; **7**: 143, 147-148, 165, 335. 1915.

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REPRINT OF A RARE BOOK ON AMERICAN PLANTS. — Mr. S. N. Rhoads of Philadelphia has made accessible to botanists, through reprinting, "the earliest published book, written by an American Botanist and devoted exclusively to American Botany, Horticulture and Floriculture."<sup>1</sup> This work is divided into two parts, 1. Catalogue d'Arbes, Arbustes, et plantes herbacées d'Amérique. 2. Liste des Arbres, Arbrisseaux & Plantes qu'on ne peut se procurer que par des voyages dispendieux dans le continent de l'Amérique, & que M. Yong n'a point encore élevés en assez grand nombre pour les envoyer en Europe. Many of the names are binomials and some of them are characterized as "nova species," but the descriptions are so meager and vague that they have little defining power, as for instance "*Angelica pastinaca, nova species*. Elle a 5 pieds de haut & croit dans un sol marécageux," and, therefore, they should not be taken up to displace names with good descriptions made later. This old book has been neglected or overlooked for many years. It does not appear in the botanical bibliographies and the new names are not cited in the Index Kewensis. William Young Jr., the author, was a nurseryman and a gardener, a near neighbor of John Bartram

<sup>1</sup> M. Yong [William Young, Jr.] Catalogue d'Arbres, Arbustes et plantes herbacées d'Amérique — Paris, 1783.

of Philadelphia. He sent and carried many living plants to England for cultivation and was appointed "Queen's Botanist." Mr. Rhoads's task in searching out so thoroughly the history of W. Young has not been an easy one but he has brought together a good account of this man and his work, and while the catalogue is not of great scientific value it has much historical interest.—MARY A. DAY.

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A POPULAR HANDBOOK TO THE MOSSES.—Mrs. Elizabeth M. Dunham in "How to Know the Mosses,"<sup>1</sup> has undertaken to provide a handbook which will not require the use of a lens of any kind. When one considers that a convenient hand-lens costs only \$1.50, and that there is already available such a satisfactory book as Dr. Grout's "Mosses with a Hand-lens," it seems to the reviewer doubtful if the task that Mrs. Dunham has attempted is worth while. Her book should be judged, however, by its purpose, which is to enable "people who are content to recognize violets, asters, and goldenrods, without knowing the specific names . . . to know the generic names of mosses." The descriptions show that Mrs. Dunham has a good knowledge of the plants with which she is dealing. The illustrations are very simple, but in general they suggest the habit of the moss to one who is already familiar with it; whether they would be sufficiently suggestive to a beginner is open to question. Photographs would have been much better but would, of course, have added greatly to the cost of the book. A casual testing of the keys seems to indicate that they work out as well as could be expected. No handbook will eliminate the need of judgment and patience, and equipped with these the possessor of "How to Know the Mosses" will have an opportunity to be introduced to a fascinating group of plants, and, we may hope, will be led on to purchase lens and microscope and the more "scientific" books by Dr. Grout.

Upon opening this book and seeing its thirty pages of non-technical keys, the reviewer was reminded of his first, unaided attempt to learn the mosses nearly twenty years ago. Lesquereux and James's Manual was then the only available book, and the would-be student found no keys except the technical analysis of genera at the beginning of the book. After grappling with the heading "capsule sessile on a pedicellate vaginule," he was then confronted by "calyptra mitriform." The moss in hand had no calyptra; no one stood by to say that it was of no consequence; and the attempt to know mosses proceeded no further at that time! Whatever difficulties are encountered in the use of Mrs. Dunham's book, they will certainly not be due to technicalities.—L. W. R.

<sup>1</sup> Houghton, Mifflin Company, Boston, Mass. 1916. \$1.25 net.